notice issued by the Collector, Central Excise, Meerut for Rs. 80.30 crores;

(b) whether it is also a fact that no recovery is being made by Government despite the fact that there is no directive from the Allahabad High Court to this effect;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are restraining recovery of the amount on the advise of Government Counsel; and

(d) if so, whether the same principle is applied by Government in all matters of recovery, including that from the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Decisions are taken on merits of each case. The opinion of the Government counsel is also taken into account while deciding the issues.

Recovery against M|s. ITC by Collector of Central Excise, Patna

2026. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Board of Excise and Customs, New Delhi, vide its letter dated 30th May, 1989 has asked the Collector of Central Excise, Patna to take effective steps for the recovery against the confirmed demands from M/s ITC Ltd, Monghyr;

(b) if so, whether the Collector of Central Excise, Patna has effected recovery against the confirmed demand from M/s ITC Ltd., Monghyr; and

(c) if not, what is the present position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) M/s ITC Ltd., had paid the amount of about Rs. 1.13 crores initially demanded from them. However they have disputed the legality of the revised demand on the same count and accordingly the Collector of Central Excise, Patna has since been asked to issue a show cause notice to the Company.

High interest rate on agricultural loans

2027. SHRI KAHNU CHARAN LENKA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the farmers are being charged a higher rate of interest for agricultural loan by the banks as compared to the other categories;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to cut down the interest rate on agricultural loan due to heavy losses of crops following severe floods and droughts; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that the interest rates stipulated for agricultural advances are much lower than those stipulated for other categories of borrowers.

(c) and (d) At present there is no proposal under consideration of the Government for reducing rates of interest on agricultural loans. However, it may be stated that with a view to give relief to farmers, the interest rates charged for agriculture production credit were reduced in March, 1988 for loans upto Rs. 15,000/- and the range of reduction in the interest rates on this account was

between 1.5 per cent to 2.5 per cent. With effect from 1st March, 1989, rate of interest has been reduced from 14 per cent to 12 per cent per annum for advance over Rs. 15,000/- and upto Rs. 25000/-.

Payment of pension of freedom fighters

2028. SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken final decision regarding the payment of pension to the freedom fighters who submitted their applications after the last date, viz. 31st March, 1982 which was fixed for receipt of such applications; and

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to grant pension to persons whose applications were received after the 31st March, 1982 from the date of disposal of their applications instead of giving retrospective effect from the 31st March, 1982 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Applications received after the last date are considered for grant of pension if they are received alongwith conclusive documentary evidence of suffering based on official records together with convincing reasons for delay in applying. Pension in such cases is granted from the date of receipt of application in the Ministry and not from any earlier date.

Reservations on shifting drugs from OGL to ban list

2029. CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK:

DR. (SHRIMATI) SAROJINI MAHISHI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of representations received by his Ministry in respect of shifting of drugs from OGL to ban list during the last six months;

(b) what are the names of the drugs;

(c) whether it is a fact that most of these drugs satisfy the criteria for ban of imports;

(d) whether it is also a fact that these drugs are being exported in much more quantities than being imported;

(e) if so, what are the names of those drugs and what was the quantity imported and exported during the last two years year-wise;

(f) whether it is also a fact that due to the delay in banning the import of these drugs not only foreign exchange has been lost but indigenous capacities are also lying idle; and

(g) if so, what steps have been taken to ban the import of these drugs and by when these drugs will be banned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DASMUNSHI): (a) and (b) A statement is enclosed. (*See* below).

(c) to (g) Import policy for drugs is determined in consideration of the factors like demand, availability, technology constraints etc. Some of the life saving drugs, whose import is allowed under OGL to avoid any short supply are also exported to a limited extent.

Review of Import and Export policy is a continuous process and representations as and when received are duly considered and corrective measures taken. All such amendments are duly notified throngh Public Notices, copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.